

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled).

2 (Currently Amended). The method for implanting a heart valve anchor as set forth in claim 1 5 or 6, wherein:

said step of selecting said anchor device includes selecting said anchor device to include a radially outwardly projecting stop ring on a proximal end thereof, and

said step of inserting said anchor device includes inserting it sufficiently far to position said stop ring on a proximal side of said annulus.

3 (Currently Amended). The method for implanting a heart valve anchor as set forth in claim 1 5 or 6, that further includes the steps of:

after shifting said retainer to said retainer deployed position, shifting said rings elements to said recessed position to shift said retainer from said retainer deployed position to said retainer recessed position.

4 (Currently Amended). The method for implanting a heart valve anchor as set forth in claim 1 5 or 6, that further includes the step of:

imbedding said retainer in said annulus.

5 (Currently Amended). The A method for implanting a heart valve anchor ~~as set forth in claim 1, wherein~~ in a heart annulus comprising the steps of:

selecting an anchor device for receipt through said annulus including spaced apart ring elements shiftable axially relative to one another from recessed to deployed positions and a retainer retained between said ring elements operable upon said ring elements being shifted from a retainer recessed position to a retainer deployed position projecting radially outwardly;

accessing an artery of said patient and inserting said anchor device therethrough to position it in said annulus; and

said step of shifting said rings elements axially relative to one another to said deployed position include by rotating them relative to one another to shift said retainer to said retainer deployed position.

6 (Currently Amended). The A method for implanting a heart valve anchor ~~as set forth in claim 1, wherein~~ in a heart annulus comprising the steps of:

selecting an anchor device for receipt through said annulus including ~~said rings~~ are spaced apart ring elements threaded to one another and shiftable axially relative to one another from

recessed to deployed positions and a retainer retained between said ring elements operable upon said ring elements being shifted from a retainer recessed position to a retainer deployed position projecting radially outwardly;

accessing an artery of said patient and inserting said anchor device therethrough to position it in said annulus; and

said step of shifting said rings elements axially relative to one another to said deployed position includes by rotating said rings elements relative to one another to shift them axially relative to one another to shift said retainer to said retainer deployed position.

7 (Withdrawn) (Currently Amended). The method for implanting a heart valve anchor as set forth in claim 4 5 or 6, wherein:

said step of inserting said device includes selecting an elongated introduction tool having a semi-rigid tubular tool housing and an elongated deployment rod projecting therethrough and coupling the distal end of said tool housing with one of said rings elements and the distal extremity of the other ring element with the other of said rings elements.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

9 (Currently Amended). An anchor device as set forth in claim 8 11 or 17, wherein:

said first ring element includes a stop in said predetermined path to limit movement of said second ring element.

10 (Currently Amended). An anchor device as set forth in claim 8 11 or 17, wherein:

a coupler is coupled between said rings elements for coupling said rings elements together for shifting relative to one another from a retracted position to said deployed position

* 11 (Currently Amended). An implantable anchor device ~~as set forth in claim 8, wherein for anchoring in an annulus, comprising:~~

said first and second ring elements for receipt in said annulus, said ring elements are being spaced apart and shiftable axially relative to one another from a retracted to a deployed position; and

a retainer device interposed between said ring elements and operable upon said ring elements being shifted to said deployed position to project radially outwardly to engage under a shelf of said annulus, said retainer includes a plurality of flexible axial strips configured to, when said one ring element is in said retracted position, assume respective axially projecting positions and to, when said one ring element is shifted to said deployed position, flex radially outwardly.

12 (Original). An anchor device as set forth in claim 11, wherein:

said device includes said strips being configured to, when said one ring element is shifted to said deployed position, flex radially outwardly.

13 (Previously Presented). An anchor device as set forth in claim 10, wherein:

said coupler includes screw threads.

14 (Currently Amended). An anchor device as set forth in claim 8 11 or 17, wherein:

said ring elements are concentric with one another.

15 (Currently Amended). An anchor device as set forth in claim 8 11 or 17, wherein:

said ring elements are flared to project radially outwardly at their proximal extremities.

16 (Withdrawn) (Currently Amended). An anchor device as set forth in claim 8 11 or 17 ~~that includes further including:~~

a driver mounted on one of said rings elements and operative upon shifting of said one ring element to said deployed position to drive said retainer to its deployed position.

* 17 (Currently Amended). An implantable anchor device ~~as set forth in claim 8 that includes for anchoring in an annulus, comprising:~~

first and second ring elements for receipt in said annulus, said rings spaced apart and shiftable axially relative to one another from a retracted to a deployed position;

a retainer device interposed between said rings and operable upon said rings being shifted to said deployed position to project radially outwardly to engage under a shelf of said annulus; and

an elongated band configured to form said first and second ring elements on the proximal and distal extremities thereof, said distal extremity being configured to, upon said proximal and distal extremities being shifted axially towards one another, project radially outwardly to form said retainer.

18 (Original). An anchor device as set forth in claim 17 wherein:

said band is constructed of material having a memory.

19 (Original). An anchor device as set forth in claim 17 wherein:

said band is constructed of a resilient material and is configured so that, upon said proximal and distal extremities being drawn toward one another, will take a set with said distal extremity disposed radially outwardly to act as said retainer.

20 (Original). An anchor device as set forth in claim 17 that includes:

a first latch element mounted on said proximal extremity and a second latch element mounted on such distal extremity, said latch elements being configured to, upon said proximal and

distal ring elements being drawn a predetermined distance toward one another, extend said distal extremity outwardly to said retaining position to latch together.

21 (Original). An anchor device as set forth in claim 20 wherein:

said first latch element includes a passage formed therein; and

said second latch element includes an axially elongated tab cantileverally mounted on said distal extremity and projecting toward said latch and further constructed of spring material and having at least one distal tooth configured to flex laterally as it engages said latch and to, upon said first and second ring elements being shifted to said deployed position, engage behind said latch.

22 (Original). An anchor device as set forth in claim 17 wherein:

said band includes a weakening strip interposed therebetween for enhancing bending thereof.

23(Currently Amended). An anchoring device as set forth in claim 8 11 or 17 wherein:

said ring elements are in the form of elongated concentric rings rotatable relative to one another to deploy said retainer;

said one ring element includes an inner ring and an outer ring, said outer ring including a plurality of retainer windows; and

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said retainer includes a plurality of resilient fingers cantileverally mounted on said inner ring and registered on their free extremities with said windows, said retainer fingers being configured such that rotation in one direction of said inner ring relative to said outer ring, the distal extremities of said retainer fingers will project through said windows and be directed radially outwardly to a retaining position.

24 (Original). An anchoring device as set forth in claim 23 wherein:

said outer ring is formed with said windows positioned relative to said retainer fingers such that, upon continued rotation of said outer ring relative to said inner ring beyond said deployed position, said retainer fingers will be retracted radially inwardly from said retained position.

Claims 25 to 35 (Canceled).

36 (Currently Amended). An anchor for receiving a prosthetic heart valve to anchor it to an annulus and comprising:

a circular ring housing;

a plurality of generally U-shaped retainers movably carried from said housing and moveable from a retracted position to a deployed position to project on their respective one extremities radially outwardly therefrom; and

an actuator mounted from said housing and engaged with said retainers, said actuator being moveable relative to said housing ring to shift said retainers from said retracted to said deployed positions.

37 (Original). An anchor for receiving a prosthetic heart valve as set forth in claim 36 wherein:

said retainers are resilient.

38 (Original). An anchor for receiving a prosthetic heart valve as set forth in claim 37 wherein:

said retainers are in the form of elongated springs mounted on their respective one ends to said housing and configured with respective free extremities forming the respective said one extremities.

39(Canceled).

40 (Original). An anchor for receiving a prosthetic heart valve as set forth in claim 36 wherein:

said actuator includes an actuator ring coupled to said housing ring.

41(Original). An anchor for receiving a prosthetic heart valve as set forth in claim 36 that includes:

a coupler coupling said actuator to said housing for guided travel of said actuator through a predetermined path and wherein:

said housing includes a stop disposed in said path to limit travel of said actuator.

Claims 42 to 46 (Canceled)

47 (Currently Amended). A heart valve anchor device for implant in a heart annulus including:

an anchor ring for receipt in said annulus;

a retainer device on said ring for selective extension into holding contact with the wall of said annulus;

an actuator on said ring for extending said retainer device; and

an occluder ~~connector~~ mounting device on said ring for removably mounting an occluder,
said occluder mounting device including a bayonet thread.

48 (Original). The heart valve anchor device as forth in claim 47, wherein:

said occluder mounting device includes a rotary connector.

49 (Canceled).

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